

March 22, 2020

From Fr. Jim . . .

This Week's Scrutiny: Those who are the Elect for the Easter Sacraments at the Easter Vigil this year celebrate the Second Scrutiny. We pray with and for all the Elect throughout the world and we examine our lives with them on these Sundays of Lent against the Gospels as we prepare to renew our Baptismal Promises at Easter.



The Gospel for the Rite of Second Scrutiny is from the Gospel of John: The Man Born Blind. The issue that this Gospel story addresses is sight – physical versus spiritual or seeing with faith. It is very clear that those with physical sight are the ones who are blind spiritually. They have trouble seeing that Jesus is the Messiah and they have great difficulty in believing in him as their Lord and Savior. On the other hand, the man who was born blind and has no physical eyesight can see because of his faith. His spiritual seeing is perfect 20/20 vision. He has little difficulty in allowing the Lord to use his physical weakness to show that Jesus is the Light of the world and he is very willing to be a disciple of the one who has given him both physical and spiritual sight. He was able to give good testimony and witness to his cure to the ones who questioned him and eventually rejected him.

Again this is a story about conversion. It shows that although sin does not make us physically blind it does blind us from seeing spiritually sometimes. It also tempts us into pretending that we can see when we really can't see at all.

Under the light of this great Gospel, how well do we see? Where might we just be pretending to see when we really can't see at all? For what do we need healing? How will the Lord use our blindness to show us and others that he truly is the light of the world? Can we pray for a deeper conversion of faith and a more active faith life? Is our Lenten fasting, prayer and acts of charity improving our spiritual vision? Is Lent leading us to see more clearly how to live our baptismal commitment?

Lord God, open our eyes that we might see your face in the faces of all people and those who may be known as enemies to us. Help us see our way to your peace and help us see more clearly to be your faithful disciples. Amen.

For your Lenten Prayer and Reflection: In *Evangelii Gaudium*, Pope Francis writes: "God never tires of forgiving us; we are the ones who tire of seeking his mercy." Sinful humanity falls into sin (sometimes the same one) again and again. But God never disheartens, and God continues to wait and watch for us to "come to our senses," as the prodigal son did and return to him. Do our Lenten practices help us "come to our senses" and return to the Lord for mercy? We are at the half-way point of Lent, is there anything that we would like to do differently for the second half of Lent? Can we pray or keep praying more for perseverance in the way of mercy, repentance, and forgiveness?